

IN AMUSEMENT LINES

Most people are familiar with the story of "Theresa Raquin" which was presented at the Lansing-Munday and Tuesday evenings under the name of "The Story of a Kiss."

A man falls in love with another man's wife, and the other man's wife falls in love with him.

The husband is a weak specimen of humanity and the wife and the lover take him out boating, and they contrive to drown him without exciting suspicion.

Then the guilty pair are married. Conscience gets in its work.

They quarrel and while they are discussing the details of their crime the mother of the murdered husband appears and overhears the conversation.

She shrieks and falls to the floor, stricken with paralysis.

The criminals live in deadly fear that the mother may recover and reveal their secret.

Finally she does regain her power of speech and accuses them.

The man pulls out a dagger and kills his wife, and then takes Prussiac acid himself and expires while the band plays.

A nice story, isn't it?

The French play was interpreted by the Italian actress, Madeline Merli, and a company of more or less indifferent players.

Miss Merli has at least one merit, that of originality. She is eccentric, and she is an actress who, under favorable circumstances, might achieve considerable success.

In one or two instances her support was quite good. But the people who witnessed "The Story of a Kiss" didn't enjoy the play. It is morbid, erotic and revolting. Guilty love is portrayed in the worst possible guise. The whole thing is disgusting.

Very "Frenchy" French novels are bad enough as novels. But on the stage they are intolerable.

"The Limited Mail" drew a very large attendance at the Lansing Wednesday night. The play was given a most thorough presentation, quite in keeping with its former appearances in this city. The scenic effects, one of the strong features of this play were very elaborate, and the company embraced a number of clever people.

Thursday night "The Waifs of New York" was presented to a fair sized audience. "The Waifs" suffered by the fire in Omaha Monday, but some of the scenery was preserved, and some more was manufactured, and on the whole the show, as seen Thursday night, was not as badly crippled as might have been expected.

"Inoc" was the attraction at the Lansing last night. Mr. Dickson will be seen again this afternoon and evening.

CHICAGO, Oct. 4.—[Special Courier Correspondence.]—At the Auditorium: Imre Kiralfy's master-piece, "America," with its gorgeous pageants and historic splendor, is still on. Chicago Opera house: "Sinbad." Hooley's theatre: M. Coquelin and Mme. Jane Hading: The Columbian theatre: Henry Irving, Ellen Terry and the London Lyceum theatre company commenced an engagement at this house Monday evening. Grand opera house: Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown." McVicker's theatre: W. H. Crane in Martha Morton's comedy "Brother John." The Schiller theatre: Felix Morris with his own company. At the Haymarket theatre: Robert Hilliard and Paul Arthur in the new comedy "The Nominee." At Havlin's South Side theatre: John L. Sullivan in "The Man from Boston." At the Trocadero: Sandow and Mrs. Alice J. Shaw, will be among the chief attractions. Buffalo Bill's Wild West show will continue to present Custer's Last Grand Charge.

Owing to the hard times in Denver the orchestra of the beautiful Tabor theatre has of late consisted of one pianist. The outdoor performances of "As You Like It" in Chicago broke up with actors unpaid and general demoralization. Light traffic has caused the withdrawal of many railway trains in the south, and the travelling plans of theatrical companies are thereby disarranged among the one-night towns. The practice of placing a popular dancer between the acts of a light or worn-out play is extending. R. M. Hooley, the Chicago manager, had spells of hard fare and bankruptcy in his day, but remained jolly and kindly through it all, and had a half a million to leave at his death. There is a probability that Beerbohm Tree will come to America next winter with his Haymarket company. The Empire's stock company, after playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me" uninterruptedly in Chicago all summer, is on a tour with that drama. The company belonging to Palmer's now travelling, will soon bring out is; Boston a Piner piece, "The Profligate" which is familiar in London but has never been performed in America. The Daly company was not very prosperous in London last summer, artistically or

in a business way, but has begun again, and may probably find favor with its beautiful production of "The Foresters."

Counting Attractions. At the matinee at the Lansing theatre today Charles Dickson will repeat "Inoc." "Salt Cellar" will be given as a curtain raiser. To-night "Admitted to the Bar" will be presented: This is an American dramatic comedy of which the story is as follows: A young attorney gains a fortune for an illegitimate son, while at the same time he protects the name of the boy's mother; although the laws of the state of California, in which the play occurs, are such that maternity is proven. The difficulties of his position can be better imagined than described, especially so in view of the fact that a claimant to the said estate turns up who knows who the mother is, and threatens to disclose her name unless certain compromises are effected.

"Jane" is a screaming farce in three acts. Humor without vulgarity is its distinguishing characteristic. The humor is of the kind that causes you to explode as soon as the curtain rises, and it keeps you in a state of bubbling laughter until it ends. When it was first produced, "Jane" made a favorable impression. It is remembered with pleasure, and on its return it will be welcomed back by a large and enthusiastic audience.

It will be recalled that a gay young London bachelor had been living three years on the interest of an estate bequeathed to him on condition that he marry. This estate is in the hands of a trustee, who pays the young man the income because the latter has informed him that he has taken a wife. The young man is unduly extravagant, and one fine day the trustee resolves to go to London and remonstrate with him. When the spendthrift learns of his coming he is in a dilemma. He has no wife, but he bribes the housemaid, Jane, to impersonate her. Jane has just been married to William, the man-servant, whom she persuades, for financial reasons, to consent to the deception. A baby is borrowed, and all manner of devices employed to deceive the confiding old trustee. The fun is fast and furious throughout three acts, and finally explanations are made, and all ends happily.

Mr. Frohman's company which is to appear here will include Miss Jennie Yeomans as "Jane," a comedienne well known for artistic work. Miss Yeomans' creation of "Jane" is said to be distinctly different from the many who have enacted the role. A new charm has been added. Among the other members are Adolph Jackson, Joseph Allen, Alfred Fisher, Schnitz Edwards, Master Joe Totton, Miss Francis Steven, Maggie Holloway Fisher, Miss Carrie Reynolds, and others who have helped to make the comedy famous. "Jane" at the Lansing Monday night.

Tuesday and Wednesday Elmer E. Vance's realistic comedy drama, "Patent Applied For" will be presented at the Lansing theatre. The story of the play is on a comparatively new subject, the struggle for the possession of a patent. This theme the author has handled in a very effective and dramatic manner, instead of having the characters of the play make lengthy explanations, endeavoring to convey to the audience an idea of the ingenuity and value of the invention, as most playwrights would have been content to do. Mr. Vance introduces a heavy and complicated piece of machinery in complete operation in full view of the audience. The company comprises the following: Willard Lee, W. C. Holden, Harry Rich, Philip H. Ryley, Chas. Aldrich, R. Phillips, Harry Branch, C. Aldrich, H. Rich, Chas. E. Huntington, Geo. Morrison, H. French, M. J. McKewen, Geo. Long, M. Blackwood, Kate Oesterle, Edith Talbot, Eliza S. Hudson, Little Mabel.

Hoyt's comedy "A Texas Steer" will be presented at the Lansing theatre October 13. This comedy, embracing as it does, some of Hoyt's cleverest work, enjoys a perennial freshness and popularity. In the hands of the original company it has each year been improved until it has become one of the best of its class of attractions. Tim Murphy is still doing the part of Maverick Brander, and most of the other characters are in the old hands. Flora Walsh, Mrs. Hoyt, will be missed. Her part Bossy, is taken this year by Alice Evans, who is familiar to most of the admirers of Hoyt's comedies. "A Texas Steer" has drawn a crowded house at each presentation in this city, and it will probably draw as well as ever next week.

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THE HELP THAT COMES TOO LATE.

'Tis a wearisome world, this world of ours, With its tangles small and great. It weeds that smother the springing flowers And its hapless strifes with fate. But the darkest day of its desolate days Sees the help that comes too late.

Ah! woe for the word that is never said Till the startle of the fainting head... Of the ringing shout of cheer. Ah! woe for the lizard foot that tread In the mournful wake of the bier.

What booteeth help when the heart is numb? What booteeth a broken spar Of love thrown out when the lips are dumb, And life's bark drifteth far? Oh! fast and fast from the alien past, Over the moaning bar!

A pitiful thing the gift today That is dropped and nothing worth, Though it had come but yesterday. It had brimmed with sweet the earth. A fading rose in a death cold hand That perished in want and death.

Who fain would help in this world of ours Where sorrowful steps must fall, Bring help in time to the wailing powers Ere the bier is spread with the pall, Nor send reserves when the flags are furled And the dead beyond your call.

For baffling most in this dreary world, With its tangles small and great, Its lonesome nights and its weary days And its struggles forlorn with fate, Is that bitterest grief, too deep for tears, Of the help that comes too late.

—Margaret E. Sangster in Harper's Bazar.

LESTER'S BRAIN.

If a man desires solitude, let him go to the coast line of Suffolk, keeping well to the south of the great east coast watering places, where the common herd herds. At the edge of the sea there are vast, uncompromising plains of shingle. Behind these there are marshes trailing off to heather clad moors. On each rising promontory there is a fishing village, and some of them have escaped the excursion train. At the feet of some of them the sea sings on uninterrupted by the intellectual song of the negro minstrel. Vulgar curiosity has not penetrated to some of these rural haunts, and here a man may perhaps lead his own eccentric life—be more or less resigned to existence in his own eccentric way, without being questioned over much.

To one of these hamlets Craven Lester went, keeping in mind the ex-sailor's counsel anent the sea. He wandered on an old oak gate and gazed out over the marsh with a certain patient waiting in his eyes. One Sunday evening he went to church, and Miss Marcia Otville, the rector's daughter, saw him without once looking in his direction. How she did this is not our business to inquire. It is only ours to note the fact and dumbly admire the ways of maidenhood.

The next day the old rector, Mr. Otville, called. He was a tall old man, with "a face like a benediction," who seemed to have lived his life in some bygone day and was patiently performing his daily duties in anticipation of an approaching holiday. He welcomed Lester to the parish with a kindly fervor that had no real sincerity in it and forebore from asking questions. He explained that he had seen him in church, and it was a pleasure to make the acquaintance of so cultivated a man in a rural district such as his, where education was a thing unknown, and he added, with a meaning smile, "undesirable." He glanced at some pile of books, at the open packet of sermon paper and the pen, but said nothing and presently took his leave.

Miss Marcia Otville was an enterprising young lady, and in less than a fortnight she knew all about Craven Lester. She knew, for instance, that the ink on the card laid upon him; that he was never quite happy without a pen and something to write upon. He found plenty to write about, but he had not yet found out what the British public wanted to read. Finally he told her of the incident in Myra's bar, which he vaguely described as a sort of club, and she said that she liked Sam Crozier.

She had a way of leaning forward with her elbow on her knee and her chin within her hand. She had rather wistful, deep blue eyes, with dark lashes, and when she listened to Craven Lester she looked in a dreamy way past him—over his head—through the walls. It was evident that she liked to hear of this world which he had left behind—this world so full of men—young men with hopes and aspirations and dreams and ambitions and no wives. He could hardly tell her too much about that world and of the men who formed it. She got to have likes and dislikes. She liked Sam Crozier—in fact, in a small, subtle way she began to love him. She was tall and willowy, but she did not like the Irishman, and she hated the poet chiefly because he had a bushy beard. "And," she said suddenly one day, "Have you begun to write the book?"

They were sitting on a piece of driftwood—the mainmast of some dead and forgotten ship—on the beach. He turned and looked at her with something rather like shame in his deep, reflective eyes. "No—not yet, I—I have forgotten about it lately."

Which meant that she had made him forget. She understood that and rather liked it. She knew that he was clever. The eyes which had sought the attention of the poet and of the remaining shareholders in "Craven Lester's Brain, Limited," had affected her. This man was not like others. He was certainly very different from the coarse young sporting squires of the neighborhood. Marcia Otville had an immense respect for literature. She worshipped it from afar—reading everything that percolated through to the remote country rectory. There was a certain glory in the slightest connection with a book—even in the prevention of its progress.

"But," she said, with a grave smile, "you must start at once." She made a little movement as if to rise. "I think," she went on, "that you ought to go home at once and begin."

"I would rather not," he answered quietly. "I am learning. I am soaking my brain with salt, as I was told to do by the shareholders."

handed down to her from bygone Hantevilles together with a dainty little aquiline nose and the dark blue eyes. She could not write a novel, but she could construct one with the unerring instinct of an untrammelled imagination. She knew nothing of life and what she imagined it to be was a much finer, more poetic, grander thing than Craven Lester knew it to be. And it all came about as the poet had prophesied—Some one took Craven Lester's brain and worked it like a sewing machine. But none of those men in Myra's bar had seemed to harbor the possibility that the same one should be a woman.

The plot was partly his and partly hers. She told him what he had to do with a gravely possessive little air, which made his heart leap in his breast, and he did it with a skill and power which astonished her, ignorant as she was of such matters. He worked at it night and day, and in less than two months the manuscript was sent to the poet. The bushy headed one and Samuel Crozier discussed it together in an inner room behind the red curtains in Myra's bar, while Syra, occupied in her craft, washed up her glasses and took no notice of them. From these the manuscript went to the publisher, from the publisher to the printer with an urgent letter, and for 10 days the post took a daily packet of proofs down to Craven Lester in his rural exile. The men in London knew that it was good.

Craven Lester sent the proofs back carefully corrected. Later on he wrote his name across the back of a very handsome check and started a serious banking account. But he never offered to go back to town. Myra's bar looked for him in vain. Then he suddenly became famous. Fame came to him in that strange way of hers from nowhere and yet from all ways at once. A solid fame it was, that came to stay.

In the meantime he lingered at the edge of the sea, and one day he told Marcia Otville that he loved her. He was strangely grave, anxious, breathless. Of course she ought to have seen it coming. But somehow she did not. This was chiefly owing to that imagination of hers. She had imagined it differently. It was one thing to make a man write a wonderful book—such a book as only comes once or twice in a generation. It was another to marry the author and settle down into a humdrum literary life. She had imagined herself a second Inconnu to a new Prosper Merimee. But had the Inconnu married Merimee, where would have been the letters?

She did not think that she loved Craven Lester, and she told him so, but he persuaded her to the contrary. He argued and pleaded, and finally she began to think this must be love. His great, deep eyes helped her in this decision—and a certain presence of the unexpected in him which was fascinating.

They were formally engaged, and the Rev. Mr. Otville was vastly pleased. Everything was idyllic and sweet and happy for several months, and then a friend of Marcia's childhood came home on leave from India. He was a brilliant young staff officer in all the heyday of that early fame which is not fame at all. He possessed the Victoria cross and was immensely pleased with himself and the world.

The rest of Marcia Otville's story is nauseatingly old. The man of action was a pleasant change after the absorbed man of thought. The breezy self confidence of the child of fortune was exhilarating after a long spell of that thoughtfulness which is left behind by one single failure. Craven Lester could not stand up against this reverse of fortune. He was bewildered and saw Marcia Otville's love slipping through his fingers without knowing how to stay it. "Oh, he will be all right," the young soldier said, with his lips too close to Marcia's ear, one evening in the drawing room. "He will go on writing his stuffy old books and will be successful and all that."

He had tried to read the great novel and had not come anywhere near to a comprehension of it. "You are not suited to him a bit. You would not be happy—you know you would not," went on the young officer, who was profoundly convinced that the cream of humanity wears a red coat. "Besides, what would become of me?"

That was the question. What would become of him? Marcia did not know, so she gave in. Neither of them seemed to think of asking what would become of Craven Lester.

She wrote and told him. When he called, she would not see him. So Craven Lester packed up his things and went back to town. He returned to his old rooms, and the orders came in. A magazine editor would be glad to accept stories of 3,000 words and upward. Somebody else wanted a novel. A third would pay handsomely for a serial. Craven Lester pulled himself together and bought some more sermon paper. He persuaded himself that it was well right. It was all a mistake about Marcia Otville. He had never really cared for her. Poor soul! he came down to the argument that he certainly could not care for her now—after her contemptible lack of faithfulness.

He went to Myra's bar in the evening. There he met the poet and Sam Crozier. He discussed with them various orders and decided which to accept. It was to be a novel. Another great novel, only greater. He said he had not quite decided what it should be. He did not seem to have any definite plot to offer for their approval. But he said that he would just shut himself up in his rooms and begin grinding at it. He decided any details as to the method of working which had produced the great novel, and in Myra's bar it was not etiquette to ask questions. No one knew anything of his life during the months that were past. They only saw with their eyes and heard with their ears that he was quite a different man. But then nothing changes a man so quickly and so thoroughly as fame.

Craven Lester did shut himself up in his rooms. He laid out the sermon paper and affixed a new pen in his penholder, but before beginning to work he sat back in his chair and thoughtfully nibbled the end of the penholder.

In three weeks he came back to Myra's bar. "Well," some one cried, "how is the new book getting on?" He smiled in his slow, grave way—slower, perhaps, and graver. "Not begun yet," he replied. "Not yet."

That was 10 years ago. Since then Myra's bar has been burned down and a new Myra's built up. * * * Syra—well, Syra has journeyed on, as it is written elsewhere. In the new Myra's bar, in the inner room, you may see Craven Lester any evening at the hour when the failures congregate. If any of them ask about the new book, he will answer with a smile that has grown wistful. "Not begun yet."

Wilson Leonard, the doctor, says that it is a slow, creeping paralysis of the brain. But the poet, whose head is almost white now, has a theory of his own.—National Observer.

PHILOSOPHICAL

An Old Negro Who Thought a Great Deal of Himself. Old Pete was a philosopher. He was described to me as having both a retrospective and philosophical cast of countenance. He had been a soldier, having belonged to one of the most gallantly behaved colored regiments that fought in the battle of Fort Donelson.

The person to whom I am indebted for the following dialogue discovered old Pete upon the hurricane deck of a Mississippi steamer, and by way of an introduction said: "I suppose you were in the war, for you look like a soldier?" "Yes, sah, I had a little taste ob it at Fo't Donelson."

"Stood your ground, did you?" "No, sah; runned."

"Ran at the first fire, did you?" "Yass, sah; would hab run soonah if I'd knowed it was comin'."

"Why, that was not very creditable to your courage?" "Massah, wah wasn't in my line. Cookin' were my professin'."

"Well, but had you no regard for your reputation?" "Yes, sah; but reputation's nuffin what-ever to me by de side of life."

"Do you consider your life worth more than other people's?" "With more to me, sah."

"Then you must value it very highly." "I does, sah, more dan all dis world, mo'ah dan \$1,000,000, for what am dat to a man wid de bref out'n himself? Preservation am de fust law, sah."

"But why should you act upon a different rule from other men?" "Case different men has different vailers on dair libes. Mine am not in de market."

"But if you had lost it in the war you would have had the satisfaction of knowing that you died for your country?" "Wot satisfaction would dat be, massah, wid de power of feelin' gone?"

"Then patriotism and honor are nothing to you?" "Nuffin whatever, sah. Nuffin whatever. I 'gards 'em as 'mong de vanities."

"But if our soldiers had all been like you traitors might have broken up the government without resistance?" "Yass, sah, dar wud been no help fur it."

"Do you think any of your company would have missed you if you had been killed?" "Mebbe not, massah. A dead white man ain't much account, let alone a dead nigger, but I'd miss myself awfully, and dat was de pint wid ole Pete."—Philadelphia Times.

A Felt Hat.

The stories told of the ready wit of Mr. Charles H. Webb are many and amusing. Best of all, they rarely contain any of that "sting" so frequently found in the repertoire of acknowledged wits.

On one occasion when Mr. Evans, recently returned from Brazil, was relating to Mr. Webb some of his hunting exploits in that country, where he had bagged monkeys, taptirs and many other creatures, Mr. Webb asked:

"Are you a good shot?" "Oh, I can snuff a candle," replied the traveler.

"I suppose that's why you went out there to practice on taptirs," said the wit quietly.

A certain judge, a scholarly man and a most brilliant conversationalist, who was, however, noted as an interminable talker, said one day, speaking of Mr. Webb, "There's a clever fellow, a brilliant fellow; what a pity he has an impediment in his speech!"

This remark was repeated to Mr. Webb by an intimate friend. On hearing it he said gravely:

"There's judge—; he's a clever fellow, a brilliant fellow; what a pity that he hasn't!"

An excellent rebuke is that which Mr. Webb is reported to have given to his cook on one occasion.

"You don't think I'll ate with a nayger?" inquired that functionary indignantly on hearing that a colored waiter had been engaged.

"I don't know," answered Mr. Webb quietly. "I'll speak to him and see if he has any objections."—Youth's Companion.

All Right. "My wife will bear witness," said the prisoner at the bar, "that at the very time I am accused of burglarizing Mr. Smith's premises I was engaged in walking the floor with my infant child in my arms, endeavoring to soothe it by singing 'Rock-a-bye, Baby!'"

"The prisoner is discharged," remarked his honor. "He can prove a lullaby!"—Harper's Bazar.

Encouraging. The Rector—Well, Mr. Smithers, what did you think of the entertainment last night (penny readings and part songs by the choir), and my Shakespearean recitation; did you like it?

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